



Emergency Management **UPDATE**

April/May 2002



Treading water. Above, Virginia Dept. of Forestry personnel Scott Turman and Tony Gilmore carry food and water to residents isolated when Stoney Creek washed out the road in Scott County. (Photo by Ken Murray, Kingsport Times-News.) Right, members of the Gate City Volunteer Fire Department help Norma Smith off a bulldozer used to rescue her from the rising waters of Big Moccasin Creek. (Photo by David Grace, Kingsport Times-News.)



Three strikes for Southwest Virginia

Compiled by Suzanne Simmons and
Bob Lambert, PAO Staff Writers

The night of March 17, floodwaters tore through Southwest Virginia's mountain streams sweeping up rocks, trees, debris, and even homes in its wake.

When the record river crests finally subsided, one life was lost and at least 1,000 homes were severely damaged.

Businesses were ruined, infrastructure destroyed and households devastated for the second (and in some cases third) time in eight months. Heavy rainstorms resulting in pockets of severe flash flooding produced similar results each time.

Eight of the nine counties covered in last year's federal disaster assistance programs found themselves in the same boat again. This year, Wythe County and the city of Norton joined the list, which

included Dickenson, Lee, Russell, Scott, Smyth, Tazewell, Washington and Wise.

High water in July 2001 and March 2002 submerged communities that had not seen a flooding event in more than 20 years. Suddenly, governments and individuals faced the monumental task of cleaning up; rebuilding roads, water systems and homes; and coping with the impact on citizens.

The mountainous and remote terrain made preliminary damage assessment more difficult and time consuming. Two weeks after the initial presidential declaration April 2, FEMA made public assistance available to nine counties and one city for repairs to roads, bridges and public buildings, and for debris removal.

"This disaster reemphasized the importance of promoting interim systems, such as the Red Cross and other volunteer organizations, to provide assistance until

federal disaster programs are in place," says VDEM State Coordinator Michael Cline.

"State and local response agencies, government and volunteers must also be prepared to address needs arising from future disasters that may not be federally declared."

After last year's floods, Tazewell and Russell counties established disaster recovery task forces to coordinate future voluntary emergency response efforts. When this year's floods struck, they were ready.

Russell activated its network of volunteer, civic and business organizations to aid in the response. Tazewell offered information on task force setup and implementation to other declared counties.

"Over and over, these groups accomplish what others cannot," says Cline. "We strongly encourage localities to establish disaster recovery task forces like Tazewell and Russell counties. (cont'd on page 3)



Tank trouble. Rodney Haywood (at boat) and Tom Boggess of the Giles County Regional Hazmat Team retrieve containers from the Pendleton Island Preserve. (VDEM Photo by Bob Lambert.)

Putting 'mussel' into SWVA flood cleanup

by Bob Lambert, Staff Writer

When the scenic Clinch River floods, humans aren't the only victims of the devastation. Wildlife on the Pendleton Island Preserve can also be put at risk from debris that may contain hazardous materials.

The chain of three sandy, wood-covered islands, totaling 35 acres, hosts 45 species of freshwater mussels, eight of them listed as endangered.

If you have 100 "empty" one-quart motor oil containers, you're going to get enough residue to affect wildlife, notes Jack Tolbert, VDEM Area 6 hazardous materials officer (HMO).

Hazardous materials teams from Giles and Wise counties and the city of Bristol combed the Clinch following the March floods to retrieve drums, containers and spray cans.

By rigging a rope ferry with a small aluminum johnboat, they transported more than 5,000 drums, cylinders and spray cans containing everything from propane, gasoline and fuel oil to paint, pesticides and other household residues.

In a one-week period, two National Guard/hazmat helicopter area flyovers also revealed 38 sites containing hazardous materials that had been missed during land and waterway searches.

Throughout the 10 federally declared localities, hazmat officers turned up some 8,000 potentially dangerous containers.

More than 2,400 gallons of fuel were collected, settled out and recycled as fuel for special burners used for heating or hot water. The empty containers produced at least 10 tons worth of scrap.

The process reduces disposal costs, recycles material and helps get federal reimbursement for the cleanup. Tolbert has simplified container documentation to qualify for recovery expenses from FEMA.

"We log five-gallon buckets, household waste, 20-, 30-, and 55-gallon steel and polypropylene drums," Tolbert says.

"We also see a lot of propane cylinders from the small one-pound size up to 1,000 pounds. Fuel tanks range from 275 gallons up to 3,000 gallons.

"Floodwaters rip them from their foundations, spilling their contents. Sometimes, we've also pumped out basements when the tanks overturn."

Until recently, HMOs didn't collect empty containers, water heaters and pressure tanks.

"Then, we ended up chasing down the same drums after the next flood," Tolbert says. "Now the teams pick them up to get them out of circulation permanently."

Using muscle to keep hazardous containers from contaminating the fragile river sands benefits not only humans but also the highest concentration of Cumberlandian mollusk species known to exist anywhere in the world.

Scholarship spotlight

Although this year's Addison E. Slayton, Jr., Scholarship recipients have taken different career paths, they share a passion for community disaster education.

Hui-Shan Walker, a two-time recipient, is applying her award toward a masters in public administration at Old Dominion University. Originally from Raleigh, N.C., the Chesapeake deputy emergency management coordinator started her career with American Red Cross disaster field services and says she realized it was her true calling during the October 1998 floods in Texas.

"As my experience and knowledge of the four phases of emergency management grew, I realized I can make a difference in people's lives," Walker says. "It's a constant challenge to increase citizens' awareness level and inspire them to take action with what they have learned."

Leslie Little started the Williamsburg-based HELPU Fire and Life Safety (How Eliminating Limited Perceptions Unifies Us) program in 1999 to provide fire and disaster education for at-risk populations such as disabled seniors, the homeless and non-English speaking individuals.

She is applying her scholarship toward tuition costs for a bachelor of science degree in emergency administration and management at Arkansas Tech University and is doing supplemental coursework at Thomas Nelson Community College, Hampton, Va.

At Arkansas Tech, she helped develop two courses for teaching disaster planning and disaster preparedness for at-risk populations.

"I got interested in emergency management through personal experience," Little says. "I lost a home to a hurricane, experienced a tornado, and lost another home to a fire. I also lived through at least four ice storms and severe winter storms."

The Slayton Scholarship is awarded annually to deserving emergency management students during the annual Virginia Emergency Management Conference. To learn more, visit the VEMA Web site at www.vemaweb.org/prodev/scholarship.htm.



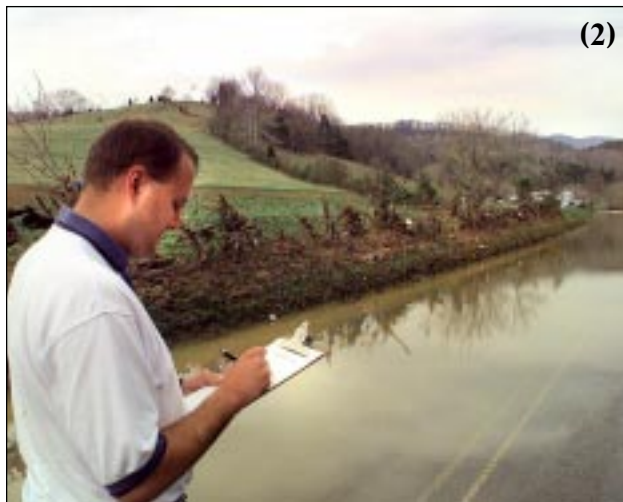
Photo 1: Overflow from the Guest River put three to four feet of water in downtown Coeburn. **Photo 2:** Jeff Stapleton conducts a damage survey along the North Fork of the Holston River in Scott County. (Photos by David Grace, Kingsport Times-News.)

Three strikes (from page 1)

“They bring in volunteer organizations, such as the Red Cross and Salvation Army, church-based groups, local and state government agencies, private non-profits and the local business community. Locally based operations and people work together, putting into place an important piece of the puzzle that can help people rebuild their lives.”

Emergency managers can be certain there will be more floods in this mountainous area. Early communication will be key to assessing flood impacts and ensuring victims are aware of assistance opportunities. FEMA has now streamlined the process by consolidating its toll-free teleregistration and helpline numbers into 1-800-621-FEMA.

“We can’t move the mountains, but we can be ready to respond to these events to save lives, protect property and prepare for the future,” says Cline.



Photos 3 & 4: Preliminary debris removal included hefting a sodden mattress onto a stake truck in Lee County. A North Carolina church, which experienced a disastrous fire a year ago, sent a truckload of food and supplies to flood-stricken Dante in Russell County. (VDEM Photos by Suzanne Simmons & Bob Lambert.)



Photo 5: A front-end loader moved indoors to take on a new role in cleaning up a flooded Lee County grocery store. (VDEM Photo by Jack Tolbert.)

Mitigation plans key to grant eligibility

by Bob Lambert, Staff Writer

Three Southwest Virginia planning districts, hit by severe flooding for the second time in less than a year, are expected to apply for FEMA pre-disaster mitigation planning grants under the 2000 revisions to the Stafford Act.

"The regional planning districts are an excellent vehicle for getting the job done," says Richard Dameron, VDEM hazard mitigation program manager.

"These districts are well established, equipped to work with the localities and have expressed a strong interest in helping them get their plans submitted."

The March flooding affected 10 of the 13 counties and two of the three cities in the mountainous, sparsely populated area.

While attention is being focused on the flood-prone region, about 270 Virginia localities need their all-hazard mitigation plans approved to continue grant eligibility in future disasters.

For continued federal mitigation assistance eligibility, the deadline for localities to have federally approved plans is Nov. 1, 2003.

"Although final federal guidelines have not been completed, communities should develop and submit their mitigation plans as quickly as possible, even if they have to modify their plans later," Dameron says.

Under the revised act, FEMA is tightening up mitigation grant standards to reduce repetitive losses from natural disasters, especially floods and hurricanes.

Localities use mitigation grants to elevate, relocate, or acquire and demolish structures



Nowhere to go. Floodwaters were 20 feet deep along the North Fork of the Holston River in Saltville. A federally approved all-hazard mitigation plan will soon be required for localities like Smyth County to ensure their continued grant eligibility for future disasters. (VDEM Photos by Wade Collins.)

subject to flooding and other natural hazards.

The revised Stafford Act has established a national pre-disaster mitigation program and is improving administration of disaster relief.

The changes also provide for special aid to small, impoverished communities.

To take part in the new mitigation program, communities must participate in FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP), which requires building and zoning ordinances to control development in flood-prone areas.

"The new legislation will reduce separate planning requirements for all FEMA mitigation programs," says Robert Linck, FEMA Region III planning specialist.

"The new planning criteria will require local governments

to have an approved mitigation plan as a condition of receiving any federal mitigation grants, including HMGP [Hazard Mitigation Grant Program] grants made available after a disaster."

Guidance for developing state and local plans has been published as an Interim Rule in the Feb. 26, 2002, issue (Vol. 67, No. 38) of the Federal Register, pp 8843-8854). It is also available in 44 CFR Part 201 and Part 206.

FEMA is providing technical assistance and training to state and local governments this spring on the mitigation planning process. They are also reviewing Virginia's existing mitigation plan.

In turn, VDEM will provide technical assistance and training to local governments developing their local mitigation plans.

Impacted SWVA planning districts

- **Lenowisco**
Lee, Wise and Scott counties
City of Norton
15 Towns
- **Cumberland Plateau**
Buchanan, Dickenson, Russell and Tazewell counties
12 Towns
- **Mt. Rogers**
Bland, Carroll, Grayson, Smyth, Washington and Wythe counties
Cities of Bristol and Galax
12 Towns

"Virginia strongly recognizes the importance of pre-disaster mitigation planning and encourages the use of all available resources in developing comprehensive pre-disaster mitigation plans and associated activities," says VDEM State Coordinator Michael Cline.

"Implementation of planned, pre-identified, cost-effective mitigation measures will streamline the disaster recovery process and reduce future disaster losses," Linck adds.

To learn more about planning requirements for grant eligibility, contact:

Richard Dameron, VDEM
(804) 897-6500, ext. 6525
rdameron@vdem.state.va.us.
Robert Linck, FEMA
(215) 931-5514
robert.linck@fema.gov.

Background information on the Pre-Disaster Mitigation Program (PDM) is available on the FEMA Web site at www.fema.gov/mit/pdm.htm.

Spring rains . . . drought remains

By Suzanne Simmons
PAO Staff Writer



Though parts of Virginia experienced flash floods and above-normal rainfall in March, this precipitation only touched the surface of the state's severe drought.

"It's a temporary fix, at best," said Terry Wagner, director of the Department of Environmental Quality's Office of Water Resource Management. "The rainfall stabilized drought conditions, but it's expected to be short lived. There's no significant improvement in groundwater, and the week of 90 degree temperatures and wind in April didn't help the situation."

While the state's major reservoirs, including Smith Mountain Lake, Lake Moomaw, Kerr Reservoir and the Philpott Reservoir, were replenished, Wagner said it is unlikely that the period of rainfall produced any appreciable groundwater recharge.

"The situation is certainly not nearly the bad news we had the first of March. Stream flows have improved significantly, but it's short term and will immediately drop back down if we don't have above average rainfall for the rest of the spring and summer."

In Giles County, hundreds of springs have dried up and others are flowing at a 50-percent reduction, with more than 50 farmers having to dig new wells. In Augusta County, more than 100 farms are drilling new wells or finding an alternative source of water for their livestock or crops.

Wagner says normal rainfall won't alleviate all of the agricultural problems nor will it significantly affect the residential water supply. Many communities have implemented conservation measures, following Gov. Mark R. Warner's March directive. Thirteen communities have instituted voluntary water-conservation measures, with the cities of Roanoke, Craigsville and Fredericksburg and Spotsylvania County initiating mandatory water conservation.

On a positive note, spring showers did provide a short-lived break in wildfire activity following the most active spring wildfire season in Virginia in 10 years. Through April 8, the Department of Forestry responded to 1,068 wildfires burning over 8,300 acres.

Crops shriveling, animals thirsting and an increase in wildfires are obvious signs of Virginia's drought. Health and economic impacts are less obvious.

"At the state Emergency Operations Center, we deal with a drought just like we deal with other disasters – assessment, planning, taking requests for assistance and managing resources — the same functions we perform for any other emergency situation," says Fred Vincent, VDEM's deputy operations director. "However, droughts are serious disasters and some of the most costly."

Fourteen Virginia localities have submitted requests for federal drought-disaster designation. Damage assessment reports have been completed for seven, with requests for Goochland and Prince Edward counties submitted to the secretary of agriculture. In early March, a disaster designation was approved for Goochland County and all contiguous localities.

To learn more, read the state Drought Monitoring Task Force reports on the VDEM Web site at www.vaemergency.com/newsroom.

Tube sharing makes \$ense

by Steven De Lisi, VDEM, Area 2 Hazardous Materials Officer

Most hazmat teams rely on some form of air monitoring to detect atmospheres containing toxic or corrosive vapors as well as potentially dangerous and explosive gases.

A sealed clear glass cylinder, known as a colorimetric detector tube, is one important tool used to ensure the safety of responders and citizens alike.

About the size of a cigarette, these tubes contain a special chemical reagent system that usually measures a specific substance. They have a limited shelf life (usually about two years) and are sold in minimum lots of 10 tubes per box, which normally allows for 10 separate tests.

Averaging more than \$50 per box, the costs of maintaining fresh inventories quickly soar. To ensure continued availability of this important resource and conserve limited funds, hazmat teams in the metro Richmond region recently began sharing their inventories of colorimetric detector tubes. Through the sharing program, two participating organizations split the contents of each box of 10 tubes to gain the ability to conduct five separate tests.

The program works by first forecasting colorimetric detector tube expiration dates on a quarterly basis using a master inventory list. After determining which tubes will soon expire, participants mutually determine who will purchase a particular box of 10 tubes and who will then receive five of those tubes at no cost. Records are kept of all transactions to ensure a fair distribution of purchasing responsibility.

Hazmat teams from Chesterfield and Henrico counties, the city of Richmond, Defense Supply Center (Chesterfield County), VDEM's Technological Hazards Division and the newly formed 34th WMD Civil Support Team at nearby Fort Pickett all participate in this program. With six participating agencies and a region-wide inventory of about 30 different types of tubes, annual expenditures for replacements could exceed \$4,500. Yet, with the sharing program, this cost is reduced by about 50 percent with potential annual savings of as much as \$2,000.

These savings also come without any noticeable reduction in the readiness of any one team to provide an effective response. History has shown that fewer than five separate tests are usually conducted during any one incident. As most participating teams operate within proximity of each other along a 20-mile span of Interstate 95, additional inventories can be quickly brought to the scene should a situation arise where more tests are needed.

To learn more, contact Steve De Lisi at sdelisi@vdem.state.va.us or (804) 897-6500, ext. 6572.



Sharing the wealth. Metro Richmond hazmat teams reap economic benefits from sharing colorimetric detector tube supplies. (VDEM Photo by Bob Lambert.)

State gets green light for terrorism preparedness funds

by Bob Lambert, Staff Writer

If you've ever had to make an emergency trip to the hospital and seem to hit every red light along the way, you can understand the complexities involved in obtaining federal terrorism preparedness funds.

Since the Sept. 11 attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, Congress has accelerated approval of a wide range of programs designed to strengthen local abilities to respond to terrorist attacks. However, many of these initiatives limit funding to specific purposes as opposed to a more flexible block grant approach.

Some programs offer direct assistance without state oversight and management while others require it, especially in the area of equipment purchases. Throughout this process, the state's underlying anti-terrorism strategy has remained unchanged.

"We are implementing a regional approach to funding wherever possible to focus resources more effectively," says VDEM State Coordinator Michael Cline.

"Our nationally recognized regional hazardous materials response program has been going strong since 1989. We know this concept works well and believe that a multi-discipline regional response team has the same potential to provide rapid, effective response to a variety of incidents."

The Commonwealth is attempting to focus resources by procuring caches of standardized regional equipment for use in local responses.

Uniform purchases offer savings through bulk purchases and ensure interoperability. The value of interoperability extends beyond each region because a major event may pull surrounding localities and regions into the response — as seen in the Pentagon attack.

Federal funding categories:

- **Northern Virginia Emergency Response Needs.** \$85 million allocated under a special supplemental Defense Department appropriation. The fund includes \$48.6 million for emergency response equipment and communication technology for fire, rescue and police personnel in nine Northern Virginia localities. (See box at right for allocations by locality.)



- **Metropolitan Medical Response System.** A U.S. Public Health Service grant of \$1.2 million for Hampton Roads to establish a response plan for weapons of mass destruction, purchase pharmaceuticals and equipment, and train first responders in the region. Additional grants under the program include \$400,000 for Arlington and \$200,000 for Richmond.
- **Health Resources and Services.** A \$23.8 million Centers for Disease Control allocation to the Virginia Department of Health to help hospitals prepare for mass casualties in a bio-terrorism attack (\$20.8 million for bioterrorism response and \$3 million for hospital assistance).
- **Local firefighter training.** The National Fire Academy is providing funds to the Department of Fire Programs to deliver terrorism training programs for Virginia firefighters. FEMA also funds training development and delivery of Virginia-specific training through VDEM.
- **Weapons of mass destruction equipment, supplies and training.** Equipment, supplies and training funds for state and local government from the U.S. Department of Justice and FEMA.

Department of Justice (DOJ) funding for local equipment purchases is coming out of two congressionally approved budget accounts: 1999 and 2000-01. Funds from the 1999 account became available in the fall of 2001 after the application process and regulatory guidelines were finalized.

The 1999 DOJ grant allocated \$1.04 million to enhance regional response capabilities with new detection equipment,

radiological kits for state police, regional communications equipment (including encrypted radios) and decontamination systems. Grants for planning and \$250,000 in subgrants for localities were also incorporated into this appropriation.

The DOJ restricted these purchases to personal protection, detection and monitoring, decontamination and communications for regional response. VDEM is securing the equipment in the restricted categories based on requests by localities.

The 2000-01 DOJ grant includes \$3.5 million for equipment purchases. In the spring of 2001, VDEM hazardous materials officers surveyed the capabilities and needs of all Virginia localities.

The Department of Justice has approved the statewide strategy for using the money, and VDEM will provide criteria to purchase the equipment for first responders when the funds are received.

Finally, VDEM receives an annual allocation from FEMA, which supports the following initiatives/programs:

- Terrorism training courses (free to localities)
- State anti-terrorism plan and sample local plan development
- Regional exercises on handling weapons of mass destruction
- Secure Virginia Initiative Panel support
- Meetings/exercises with federal agencies

To learn more about terrorism preparedness and training opportunities, visit the VDEM Web site at www.vaemergency.com.

Northern Virginia Funding

Emergency response equipment and communication technology funding will enable fire, rescue and police to purchase protective suits, breathing masks, hazmat detectors, a mobile emergency command center and satellite telephones.

Supplemental Defense Department appropriation allocations include:

Arlington County	\$16 million
Fairfax County	\$12 million
City of Alexandria	\$8 million
Prince William County	\$4.3 million
City of Fairfax	\$1.5 million
City of Manassas	\$1.5 million
City of Falls Church	\$500,000
City of Manassas Park	\$500,000

Tire fire proves to be formidable foe

Tire fires are not new quarry for state hazardous materials hunters. In the past two decades, they have successfully stalked large blazes in Wakefield and Winchester. However, the March 23 outbreak in Roanoke County proved to be an entirely different animal.

With about three million tires spread over 40 acres, this prey proved to be a worthy opponent who not only gathered in the open, but also lay in wait in ravines and entrenched underground.

Roanoke County Emergency Management Coordinator Donald Gillispie, the callback officer that day, says the outbreak was initially reported as a brush fire along the railroad tracks. When he saw the thick black smoke from his driveway, he knew they were in for a long, hard fight.

“We had a fire on the same site about three weeks prior to this one, so we knew where the tires were,” says Gillispie. “In our initial attack, we went to the head of the brush fire to keep it from getting beyond one original pile of tires.”

However, gusty winds started spot fires around and behind the staged units as they fought to control the blaze. When a large blowup of the brush fire swept it towards the firefighters protecting the main tire site, the incident commander issued an emergency evacuation order.

“I’ve observed a lot of tire fires and, in most cases, responders try to put everything in the world on them to put them out,” says Gillispie. “We had pretty much decided if the fire went beyond our initial efforts to control, we would let it burn.”

VDEM Area 8 Hazardous Materials Officer Tommie Crozier had also been watching the site and sizing up his opponent long before he got the call from the Virginia Emergency Operations Center to join the response effort. In fact, he had worked with the county to draft a tire removal plan for the site prior to his employment with VDEM.

That plan would play a critical role in the success of this operation. Though they adapted to an evolving scenario, Roanoke County was able to employ much of their contingency plan throughout the course of the event. When the incident commander notified the communications center that the fire had now spread to the tire dump, the pre-incident survey plan was activated.

State and county agencies were automatically notified. Within hours, the county Emergency Operations Center was operating under a state of emergency and housed the combined local, state and federal team.

The decision to let the fire burn required several health advisories to be posted for the entire Roanoke Valley due to smoke. Runoff is also a major concern with any incident involving burning tires. As the tires cook, a chemical decomposition known as pyrolysis can result in the release of oil. Responders knew that three million tires could produce a lot of oil and needed to ensure that any release didn’t contaminate the environment.

“I knew we had no way to put in the type of containment measures this event required without bringing in contractor support,” says Crozier.

Crozier says he forwarded a “wish list” to VDEM Technological Hazards Director Brett Burdick and soon had all the technical



Burning questions. As firefighters at left worked to extinguish the tire fire, they implemented containment measures such as the underflow dam above to address potential runoff. (Photos courtesy Environmental Protection Agency.)

support the on-site team needed for the response. With the aid of a contractor, responders were able to implement three effective runoff containment strategies:

- Three detention basins near the site
- Blocking Norfolk and Southern Railway culverts between the site and Back Creek
- Underflow dams (last line of defense)

Both Burdick and Gillispie agree that it is imperative to have a plan and follow it for these types of events. They also say localities should be prepared to move beyond an incident to a unified command structure.

“From the time we arrived, Roanoke County wanted to push this response forward as a unified command,” explains Burdick. “We mutually agreed that the unified command would first resolve immediate public safety issues before the incident would be turned over to EPA control.”

Burdick says the team identified five thresholds to be met prior to the transition:

- Extinguish the 1,064-acre woodland fire
- Implement runoff controls
- Conduct a site survey to confirm that the tires were the only remaining public safety concern
- Pronounce the air quality to be at an acceptable standard (Department of Environmental Quality and the Virginia Department of Health)
- Obtain EPA access to the site (legal issue)

(continued on page 8)



Emergency Management

Coordinator's Briefing

May 16/Abingdon

Disaster Response and Recovery Operations

June 4-6/Newport News

Effective Communication

June 11-13/Portsmouth

Emergency Planning Workshop

June 18-20/Richmond

Basic Public Information Officer

July 30-Aug. 1/Hampton Roads

Radiological

Radiological Emergency Response Training - General Session

June 25/North Anna

Virginia Operations Plan Exercise

July 16/Richmond + jurisdictions

Reservist Training

VEOC Tabletop/Action Tracking (I & P only)

May 9/Richmond

Reservist Program Seminar

May 15/Roanoke

Decision Making Skills

June 11/Richmond

Community Relations Workgroup/

Media Awareness - June 19/Roanoke

Search and Rescue

NASAR Conference

May 30-June 2/Charlotte, N.C.

SAR Dog Workshop

June 22-23/Loudoun County

SAR Council

July 27/Richmond

Technological Hazards

Hazmat Tactical Command & Safety - June 18-20/Lynchburg

Hazmat Planning & Management

Sep. 13-15/Bristol

Hazmat Conference

Sep. 26-28/Virginia Beach

Tire Fire (continued from page 7)

"Those five critical criteria were the most positive outcome of the unified command," says Burdick. "It was an almost textbook response. Roanoke County was well prepared, made all the right decisions and had fostered the relationships with their state and federal counterparts that are so critical in joint operations. There were no bad decisions."

"Ultimately on tire fires, the best advice I could give is to protect exposures and let them burn," says Gillispie. "They will burn quickly with very little runoff and residue and you haven't contaminated the area around the site."

For more information, contact Division Chief Donald Gillispie or Fire Chief Richard Burch at (540) 561-8100 (e-mail: dgillispie@co.roanoke.va.us or rburch@co.roanoke.va.us).

Smoke in the Wind: Tire Fire Weather Stats

Sustained Winds	15-22 mph
Wind Gusts	30-40 mph
Relative Humidity	14%

Terrorism Preparedness Training Schedule



Public Safety Response to Terrorism (PSRT) - Tactical Considerations

May 14-15/DSCR Richmond

May 22-23/Henrico County

June 5-6/Petersburg

PSRT - Hazmat Team Operations

May 23-24/Henrico County

PSRT - Awareness

May 29/Salem Cardinal Criminal Justice Academy



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